

SLATEST NEWS

Your free community newsletter produced by Ballachulish Community Forum

Edition 25 – August / September 2020



Thank You Ballachulish!

As Arkwright might say, it's been a funny old year, and it's not finished yet. The recent edition of Slatest Extra outlined some of the amazing things we as a community have achieved this year, and some of the amazing people that have helped make it happen. However, things are now starting to get back to normal, Slatest News is back through your door and inside are more updates and information.

WELCOME BACK!

Thank you to everyone who has supplied articles for this edition of Slatest. This is your magazine, and it always has room for new items. If you have some interesting

snippets of local news or history or have found some old photos or want to share a memory, please get in touch – rileyrob@btinternet.com, we can also help put articles together.



Slatest belongs to the community, and needs your support to continue being a success. The deadline for the next edition is **14th September 2020** with deliveries by the end of September, so please get in touch if you have any events or ideas!

Things have certainly changed a lot over the last few months, and one of the big changes for Slatest is that the small profits that had been accumulated over the last three years have all now been spent. In addition, advertising revenue is likely to be lower than it was for some time as businesses re-assess their finances. We would like to thank all of our advertisers past and present for their support, but appreciate that this is not the time to be pushing them for more money.

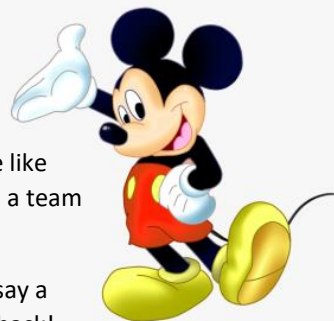
Slatest News will continue, however, with community agreement that it is worth a small loss in the short term to maintain this well loved newsletter. However, if anyone would like to make a small donation, it will be gratefully received. An average copy of Slatest News costs a little over 50p to print, so that is about £3 per household per year – just think how much your favourite newspaper or magazine costs!

Donations can be made anonymously and dropped into the Black letterbox at the village hall, or paid direct to the Ballachulish Community Association bank account (please put Slatest News in as a reference): RBS 83-20-16 / 10833089. The same applies for any other donations you wish to make – please put in an appropriate reference (eg: Foodbank or Resilience).

Thank You Everyone.

A promotional banner for the Ballachulish Visitor Centre. The top section has a dark blue background with a white 'i' logo and the text 'Ballachulish Visitor Centre' in white. Below this is a collage of images: a top-left photo of a small cafe table with a menu and a drink; a top-right blue box with white text listing 'Visitor Information', 'Activity Bookings', 'Crafts & Gifts', and 'Café', with a 'Scotland' logo below; a bottom-left photo of the exterior of the visitor centre building; and a bottom-right photo of the interior of the cafe. The bottom of the banner is a dark blue bar with the text 'Tel: 01855 811866 | www.glencoetourism.co.uk' in white.

THANK YOU



The last four months have been odd to say the least, but we like to think that our community has pulled together, worked as a team and come out the other side stronger than ever.

So, if you can say yes to any of the below, we would like to say a big Thank You to you, and please give yourself a pat on the back!

Thank you if...

- You've had the green signs up in your window
- You've been out patrolling, or checking the signs when out
- You've used the sinks at the Co-op
- You've worn a mask when required
- You've volunteered to help the resilience group
- You've helped with form filling, admin or delivering
- You've been out litter picking, weeding, grass or tree cutting
- You've stayed at home to protect yourself and others
- You've helped Mickey, Donald and friends, or given them kisses and air hugs
- You've displayed Rainbows, Easter Eggs or Teddy Bears in your window
- You've made new friends, or caught up with old ones
- You've been gardening or decorating around the village
- You've donated to the foodbank
- You've been looking out for friends and neighbours
- You've fetched Prescriptions or shopping
- You've spoken to friends far and near on the phone or web
- You've donated to the Wellbeing Bank
- You've helped with or nominated someone for a RAK
- You've learnt new skills, or shared with others
- You've continued working throughout Lockdown to keep life moving
- You've used Lockdown to get fitter, catch up on DIY, start a new hobby or anything else to make your life better

So Thank you to you all, you are all amazing!

DISNEY FUN CONTINUES

Since April 24th children AND adults in Ballachulish, Glenachulish and Glencoe have been entertained every Friday evening at 6pm by characters from Mickey Mouse's Club House. In discussion with mums and dads and Team Disney some of our local kids (whose identities will be revealed soon), will still continue to go around spreading fun and smiles. This they will co-ordinate amongst themselves but please be aware that they will not be visiting when it's raining nor when it's really hot. The day may also change and the time too, to perhaps an earlier time and they might also invite some 'friend' to join them. If they do manage to let the 'agent' know in time we may be able to put a post on the Slatest Page and the Hall page.

They have promised to visit the children who have been there every week blowing kisses and air hugs, but in the meantime if you have grandchildren visiting and would like a visit to wherever you are please get in touch and we will be sure to pass the message on.

Thank You

Team Disney #belikeballa



Just a few photos of Mickey, Minnie, Donald, Daisy and Goofy enjoying their daily exercise around our village.

RAKS ... THANK YOU'S

Since the first week in April almost 200 Random Acts of Kindness (RAKs) have been delivered throughout Ballachulish, Glenachulish and Lettermore.

I would like to thank everyone that has entered into the 'spirit' of the initiative, it has been an absolute pleasure to co-ordinate and has been a lot of fun. Special acknowledgements must go to Deborah Fyfe and Ruth Sime for 'nominating' me to co-ordinate it ☺ and a very BIG thank you to Carol MacKenzie. Jenna Grant and Caroline Thurnham for the footwork involved in their cheery deliveries to make someone's day.

While the 'treats' being delivered varied, a specific mention must go to Jan Gosden and Jan Hamilton who crafted the lovely bags that some of the RAKs were delivered in. The delicious home baking that was included over the weeks was baked by Alma Strachan, Isobel Robertson, Marjie Thornton, Gina Donoghue, Judy Bigham, Sarah MacDonald, Mary MacDonald, Caroline Thurnham, (Co-ordinator), Veronica Mansefield Moore and Lyndsay Michie. **THANK YOU ALL.**

Also, CONGRATULATIONS to Lyndsay on the creation of Stiff Peaks bakery !! We wish you every success.



FOODBANK UPDATE

Ballachulish Community Support Group is pleased to confirm that, thanks to funding from HIE, we have appointed Rachael Crewsmith to the role of Community Support Worker. Rachael's role will consist of running the foodbank and assisting with our communications and forward planning. She has been a member of the foodbank team since it opened and we are delighted to have her on board in this more formal role. Rachael will be in post until the end of September.

Thank you to everyone who has donated to the Food Bank so far. As we move into this next phase of easing of lockdown and government income support starts to reduce, we anticipate the food bank being needed as much as ever. As a lot of our volunteer team are returning to work, we have reduced the opening hours to just Tuesday from now on and we have a new team of amazing volunteers to help staff the food bank. We are so grateful to them for giving up their time and energy for this important community service.

The Food Bank was established on the back of the pandemic and whilst it is for anyone, it is especially for people who are negatively affected by Covid19. There are many people who do not have any other type of social support, have had their working hours cut or who have fallen through the gaps of the government support schemes. If you feel this is you or you know of someone please encourage them to get in touch.

We are open every Tuesday 4pm-6pm in Ballachulish Village Hall and there is a confidential helpline where you can leave a message and a member of the team will get back to you. We can also arrange discreet delivery at any time.

Thanks to the continued generosity of Morrisons, the Coop and local donations we have handed out over 140 food parcels and are regularly supporting around twenty families.

If you are thinking of donating to the food bank, there are several ways to do it. If you have a glut of something from your garden; be it veg, fruit or herbs we would be delighted to take this. Home baked goodies also fly out of the door. You can also make a financial donation – see details on welcome page in this edition of Slatest News.

If you want to buy (or) provide food donations for the food bank, we are shorter on the following: or supplies of the following would be really useful:

- *Toiletries, particularly: Soap, shower gel, shampoo and conditioner*
- *Washing up liquid*
- *Pickles*
- *Cooking oil*
- *Pasta sauces*
- *Crisps & Biscuits*
- *Breakfast cereal, including Porridge oats*
- *Multi surface cleaning spray*
- *Chopped tomatoes*
- *Ketchup and condiments*
- *Cereal/snack bars*
- *Toilet roll/kitchen roll*
- *Lentils and pulses*
- *Cheese & Eggs*
- *Puddings/desserts*
- *Fresh ground coffee*

C

Ballachulish Community Food Bank

What?

There is a larder full of food, collected by your community for use in this community so please do not struggle.

Who is it for?

For anyone to receive or donate. No referral necessary, just call us or visit during opening hours.

When?

Tuesdays 4pm-6pm
Fridays 12pm-2pm
Ballachulish Village Hall

Can we help?

Yes! We can arrange a delivery for you or someone you are concerned about. If you can't make it to the hall you can call the confidential helpline.

01855 604311

Whatever your circumstances, we are here to help.
Bring your bag and pop in to see us in the village hall.

Run by Ballachulish Community Support Group

SPREAD
Kindness
INSTEAD



BALLACHULISH VILLAGE HALL NEWS

Ballachulish Community Association SCIO At the time of going to press, Ballachulish Community Association SCIO are closely monitoring government guidelines regarding social distancing and cleaning regimes. Regular bookings will be resumed when it is practically possible and considered safe for all hall users.



We also still need to hold our AGM, so please look out for details of the meeting as soon as we can organise it.

SOUTH LOCHABER BOWMEN

Archery Club at the Leven
Centre, Kinlochleven

Although we are currently not meeting, please keep an eye on our facebook page for re-activated meeting times and dates as soon as we can.

Archery sessions are run by qualified coaches in both Field and Target Archery.
Find us on facebook: www.facebook.com/SLBowmen.



CALLING ALL DOG LOVERS

Are you having a clear out? barkingmaddogrescue.co.uk are always looking for good quality items such as clothing, dvds/audio books, jewellery, handbags, bric a brac etc (no footwear unless it's unworn please) for their monthly online auctions to raise much needed funds for veterinary bills, food, neutering etc.

Items can be dropped off with me (Kim Macdonald) at Potters Cottage next to the church in Glencoe or we can collect. Phone 01855 811 420 or Email tapper_kim@yahoo.co.uk
Thank you



DUROR AND ST MUNDA'S PARISH CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Both Kirk Sessions have decided that it is not possible to open the church buildings in the meantime. The restrictions, guidelines and responsibilities are too onerous and wouldn't allow an appropriate atmosphere for worship in any case. This also applies to funerals though the minister is available to conduct services in crematoria or graveyards.



The local Church is continuing in many ways with:

Daily Readings and Prayers on our Facebook page

A short video Service every Sunday on Facebook and Youtube

'Zoom' worship at 10.30 every Sunday morning

Lots of phone calls

Two of the videos included comments from members of the congregation and others. In the first there were answers to the questions, 'What have you missed?' and 'What has saddened you?' during lockdown and in the second answering 'What blessings have you known during lockdown?'. It was lovely to get so many responses.

On Sunday 5 July we had a successful 'Drive-in' service outside Duror and Kentallen Hall and we're going to have another on Sunday 2 August in the same place at 7.00 pm. Those gathering will be asked to remain in their cars to satisfy government guidelines.

Feel free to phone Rev Sandy if you want to chat (01631 740285) or email astoddart@churchofscotland.org.uk including for links to videos or services.

Best wishes to you and yours,
Sandy

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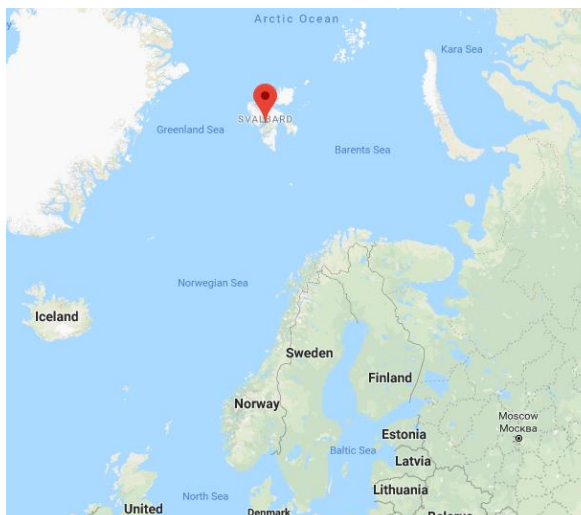
T: 01855811438/347 M: 07855813166
E: aawhyte@tiscali.co.uk
A: Ar Dachaidh, West Laroach, Ballachulish, PH49 4JJ

A PERSONAL LOG BY E W WYLD ON HER FIRST VISIT TO THE HIGH ARCTIC – PART 1

We first came to Scotland in 1955 to stay at Ardarroch Outdoor Centre (now a private house). We had done a lot of walking – Simon had climbed in Wales – and we were looking for an adventure! I have a certificate from 1955 to say I've been up the Ben! We became good friends with Mike & Avril Hammond who were running the centre at that time. I have been here now for 20 years, and only went to the Arctic for the first time because someone dropped out of a recce to find new ways north. Lucky Me! I did have some winter training and Simon was in the Mountain Rescue in Derbyshire and also helped when up here, with Hamish and the Dogs.

Introduction

Having enjoyed many previous expeditions from the comfort of the armchair (MH+A Scientific expeditions to Spitsbergen with Simon Wyld, 1970-1989), it was now my turn to see at first hand what all the excitement was about. This is my personal log of the Spring 1990 expedition to Spitsbergen, the main island of Svalbard. These islands lie between 77 and 80 degrees north, and are warmed by the Gulf stream, so that during the summer they become free of the polar ice pack.



After months of planning and the collection of gear, food, maps and second hand knowledge, it was now time to travel on the great adventure to the far north.

Thursday 29th March

The taxi arrived at 7.15pm prompt, and after a clear run to the airport arriving at 7.50, we were advised that there was space on an earlier flight, the 8.10 to Heathrow. The flight was half empty so we enjoyed a free drink, dinner and good service after a very hectic day. Ann met us at Heathrow and we proceeded to Putney for support and an update on the travellers in the southern hemisphere (A reference to family currently travelling in New Zealand).

Friday 30th March

I was woken by the sound of planes at 5.30am so got up, had breakfast and arrived at Heathrow again for 8.00 to meet Mike, Avril, Haggis and Kelvin. Haggis had my overboots and Avril my overtrousers so at last I had all my equipment.

We proceeded to check in baggage to be told that we were way over the amount allowed and that it would cost us 50 pounds, which we must pay before we all could get boarding passes! So we paid up and went for coffee. I'd been this far before and then bidden them farewell, but this time I went through to the departure lounge and on to the plane. 10.30



and we were up and away over the North Sea bound for Oslo.

After a nice lunch we zoomed into land at Oslo 1.30pm local time. The airport was very busy so we checked through the luggage, no excess this time, and off for another drink. I purchased 30 Spitsbergen postcards and 30 stamps, not to be written until I had arrived on the island.

It was very hot in the airport and we had five hours to kill so we caught the 'flybussen' to Oslo. It has certainly changed since 1981 (Family holidays in camper vans to Norway/Sweden/Finland), concrete and glass everywhere right out to the airport, even a toll road. In the centre of town it was 18°C, open air markets, lots of pedestrianization and many different nationalities. We walked up towards the palace past the university, paused for tea and then took a bus back to the airport for a planning meeting. We talked about rifle practice, cordons for bear warning, skidoo checks and sledge packing. It was difficult to imagine while sitting round a table in a stuffy airport lounge.

At last we were off for Tromso in a full DC9, sitting back from the wing hoping to see the Lofoten islands but the stewardess warned us of bad weather north of Tromso, and the possibility of no further flight north. There was very little snow round Oslo but the lakes appeared frozen. As we flew north the cloud thickened and it began to snow. At last we descended into a blanket of cloud and landed safely and stepped out into the cold night air with snow on the ground and the temperature -1°C.

We were to be delayed for an hour before the storm eased, the plane was sprayed with deicer and we went off again. We had yet another meal and looked out of the window to see an odd eerie red orange and yellow light in the sky. As we descended, this disappeared and we could see ice platelets in the sea. Land appeared from nowhere and we were on a snowy Spitsbergen runway. We stepped out into the clear silent night surrounded by white mountains, a bright moon and -19°C at midnight. We walked to the hanger to be met by the 'politi' and a lady with 3 keys for the hotel. Mike had to fill in a yellow form stating where we were going, we reclaimed our luggage and set off for the hotel. The wooden building had 40 single rooms, a common room and bathroom facilities. It was very warm and I spent the night on the floor wondering what Saturday would bring.

To be continued in the next edition of Slatest News!

All maps courtesy of and copyright Norwegian Polar Institute used under terms of "Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) License"

Photos © E.W.Wyld 1990

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4th Lochaber Scout Group

Beavers 6-8 years, 5.30-6.30pm

Cubs 8-10½ years, 6.45-7.45pm

Scouts 10-14 years, 8-9.15pm

We meet at Ballachulish Village Hall on Thursdays

Literally hours before the Slate News deadline, Scouts HQ updated their guidelines which means that the Beavers and Cubs will hopefully be able to resume meetings in August or September. This obviously also relies on the Village Hall being able to reopen. The revised guidance only applies to Primary aged children at present, which means that it is not so easy to resume Scouts, however we are optimistic that all three sections will be back in the coming months. Please watch out for updates on our facebook page.

COMMUNITY TIDY UP

Over the last four months many of us have been out and about around the village, litter picking, cutting back vegetation, weeding and generally making Ballachulish look beautiful. Thank you to everyone who has helped. HOWEVER, unfortunately nature doesn't respect your hard work and there is still work to be done.

Normally we would organise a weekend, put on a free lunch and encourage people to help out with a 'blitz'. This year that is not possible, so all we can ask is that everyone continues to do what they can when they can. If everyone could spend half an hour a week looking after a small area, our village would look spotless all year round. At this time of year, the evenings are still light enough to go out, or just take a litter picker and black bag, or some secateurs with you when walking the dog, or going to the shop and lift the litter, trim those straggly brambles, whatever is annoying you. Thank you.



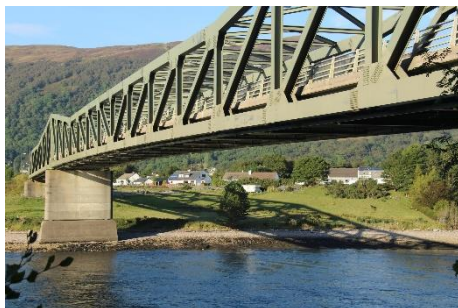
RECENT ANNIVERSARIES

On the Slatest News Facebook Page we have been keeping track of some of the anniversaries relevant to our community and surrounding area. Here are a few highlights:

3rd July

Forty Five years ago today a tremendous bang reverberated up and down Loch Leven, and was reputedly heard in Kinlochleven. It was as loud, if not louder, than any of the blasts in the Quarry before it shut 20 years earlier.

The calamitous cause of the noise became clear all too soon. A bearing had failed on the new bridge that was spanning the Ballachulish Narrows. Suddenly any hope to have the bridge open to traffic in October was gone, and not only did the engineers need to work out how to replace the failed bearing, they also needed to check the others. According to the newspaper report of the day, Cleveland Bridge engineers flew up to make the inspection and discovered that a bearing cracked on one of the bridges pillars. Fortunately it could be replaced and there have been no other structural problems identified in the last 45 years!



30th June

At the end of the School Year in June 1967 Ballachulish saw the closure of St Johns School. Originally built in the 1870s, the school had served the community for nearly a century, and had replaced the old Banks School which was based in the old Banks church, roughly where the village hall now stands.

In 1879 St Johns School had had 84 pupils, but in its last year only 21 were on the school roll. For the following year some transferred to St Mary's School in Glencoe as it was also an Episcopal School. Most, however, moved to the Ballachulish county school, which is still in use.

Following the closure of the school, the building was initially retained as a church and community hall, but then sold and converted into a home.



26th June

On this day in 1978 work started on tidying up the village. Thousands of tonnes of slate waste and top soil were moved and landscaped, thousands of trees planted and, along with the construction of the Ballachulish bypass, new paths, roads and car parks created. It was a long and arduous process, which we think was worth it as it created the beautiful shoreline and hillside we can all now enjoy.



21st June

Today is the Longest Day, the Summer Solstice, Midsummer's Day. Whatever you call it we have around 20 hours of daylight to enjoy.

However, on this day back in 1887 Ballachulish was celebrating Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee; 50 years on the throne, and a Slate Memorial was erected to remember the day. Thanks to some hard work by Philip MacLean and Stephen MacKenzie recently, the stone is now fully visible once more above the A82.



Open every day

QUARRIER

• Kitchen •

Take away 15.00-21.00

Home delivery 16.00-20.00



BALLACHULISH - COMING OUT OF LOCKDOWN

Here are some key points, in case you missed them in Slatest Extra:

- We suspended patrols from 15th July
- Green / Red flag signs can be taken down from 15th July
- The 811999 resilience number was replaced by 01855 604377 from 15th July
- The Foodbank will continue unchanged through until the end of August at least
- The Well-being bank will remain in place hopefully into the Autumn
- Our Facebook page will stay live and we will continue to post information and updates on what we're up to.

Welcoming visitors

Posters have been put up around the village to welcome visitors to our area and politely ask that they follow some simple guidelines to help our community.

The sinks will remain at the Co-op into September, and we would urge everyone to continue using them to ensure the continuing safety of our community.

In summary, we're still here, but on a quieter, sustainable basis. Stay in touch and most importantly please stay safe.

C

**Ballachulish Community
Support Group**

WELLBEING BANK

This new community resource is set up at the Shinty Pavillion and will be open each day.

The store is full of supplies to help you pass the time. Please take what you need when you need it. From time to time we will add some treats to the shelves!

If you have items to donate (books, dvds, games, jigsaws, craft supplies etc) please message us via facebook @covid19balla or call 0185581199

Thank you and enjoy!

**PLEASE USE THE HAND SANTIZER PROVIDED
AND RESPECT SOCIAL DISTANCING!**

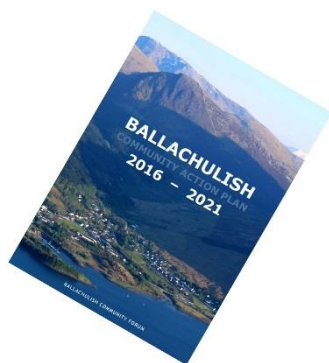
SPREAD
Kindness
INSTEAD



facebook.com/covid19balla/

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

The Community Forum started work on the next Community Action Plan for 2021-26 earlier this year. Obviously work was then put on hold when Lockdown commenced, but this does not mean that we have forgotten about it.



We are sure that you will agree that now, more than ever, having a clear idea of what the Community wants to see for the future is an essential asset, which we must resume as soon as is possible.

We therefore hope that the survey work will be carried out before the end of the year, although how this will be carried forward will rely on relaxations in the current situation.


We urge all residents to take the time to complete the survey when they receive it, whether by using the paper form that will come through your door, or the online version. The more responses we receive, the better able we are to pursue the projects that you want to see carried forward.




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USEFUL CONTACTS

If you have any questions about what is going on in the community, or would like to help with anything, please get in touch with someone below:

Community Council: www.ballachulish.org.uk

Our Community Councillors are: Michael Chisholm, Shirley Grant (Vice-Chair), Alisdair Jack (Treasurer), Dave Kitson (Secretary), Rob Malpas, Anthony McKenna, Kevin Smith (Chair)

Community Association: www.balla-hall.co.uk

Our Trustees are: Brian Dickie (Vice Chair), Mags Ingram, Donella MacDonald, Rob Malpas (Secretary), Sheila McLean, Sandy Stoddart, Marjie Thornton

Booking Secretary: Judy Bigham 811758

Community Company: [on Facebook](#)

Brian Dickie, Simon Ingram (Treasurer), Dave Kitson, Angus MacInnes, Niall McLean, Kevin Smith, Morgan Smith

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HAVE YOU MISSED SLATEST NEWS?

During Lockdown, Slatest News has continued online, via Facebook and with 4 editions of Slatest Goes Viral. We understand that not everyone will have seen these, but they can be downloaded from:

<http://www.ballachulish.org.uk/our-community/ballachulish-newsletter/>

SLATEST GOES VIRAL



If you can't access the website, please don't panic. Just fill in the slip below and drop it into the Black Letterbox at the village hall and printed copies will be through your door within 7 days (Ballachulish area only, sorry).

Thank you to everyone who has supported Slatest over the last few months and helped to keep the community up to date with everything that has been happening!



Please can I have printed copies of Slatest Goes Viral delivered to:

Address:

Easter appropriate)	May	June	July	(delete	as
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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

It hopefully doesn't need saying that all of the regular activities and events are on hold at time of going to press. We hope that things will continue to improve and that the community calendar can return in the next issue of Slatest News.

Please look out for posters and keep an eye on facebook for updates as community activities start to resume.

Advertising

If you would like to advertise your local business in this newsletter, please get in touch. Adverts will cost £20 per issue, for a quarter page. We will take a maximum of 12 adverts per issue, and can do the artwork for you if that helps.

Ballachulish Community Council, Ballachulish Community Company and Ballachulish Community Association SCIO (SC023308) have worked together to produce this newsletter.

Editors: Rob Malpas and Sheila McLean

Distribution: Sheila McLean and Kath Small (with helpers) to approximately 380 properties in the Ballachulish and Glenachulish community. Funded through Ballachulish Community Association SCIO, Ballachulish Village Hall, East Pier Road, Ballachulish PH49 4LE



HELPS PREVENT THE SPREAD OF VIRUSES

Do you need ppe to help you get back to work safely ?

Contact us and we can help you

Claymore Limited

The advertisement features a collage of images. On the left, a construction worker in a blue uniform and yellow hard hat is working on a wooden frame. In the center, two women are shown wearing face masks; one is holding a black mask, and the other is wearing a light blue surgical mask. To the right of the women are various PPE products, including boxes of 'EMERGENCY' brand hand masks, 'EMERGENCY' brand toilet covers, and 'EMERGENCY' brand hand sanitizer. A red heart with a pulse line is also visible in the upper right corner of the collage.

Claymore Limited Tyndrum Road Glencoe Tel 01855 811308